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NOTE

From:	General Secretariat of the Council
To:	Delegations
Subject:	AOB item for the meeting of the “Agriculture and Fisheries” Council on 14 July 2025 Joint Declaration of the Ministers of agriculture of the frontline Member States (Bulgaria, Hungary, Poland and Slovakia) on the agricultural aspects of the modification of the EU-Ukraine trade agreement - <i>Information from Hungary on behalf of Bulgaria, Hungary, Poland and Slovakia</i>

JOINT DECLARATION

OF THE MINISTERS OF AGRICULTURE

OF THE FRONTLINE MEMBER STATES (*Bulgaria, Hungary, Poland and Slovakia*)

on the agricultural aspects of the modification of the EU-Ukraine trade agreement

Budapest, 9 July 2025

We, the Ministers of Agriculture of the Frontline Member States (Bulgaria, Hungary, Poland and Slovakia) met in Budapest on the 9th of July 2025 upon the invitation of Hungary currently holding the V4 Presidency and discussed and agreed our common position on the review of the EU-Ukraine Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area (DCFTA).

We, the Ministers of Agriculture of the Frontline Member States

- (1) REMIND that in recent years the high volume of Ukrainian agricultural import has significantly disrupted markets in our countries, as the vast majority of goods imported from Ukraine to the EU ended up in the frontline Member States, creating an uneven playing field for our farmers.
- (2) UNDERLINE that the full liberalization of import from Ukraine has resulted in an imbalance that threatens the stability of our agricultural sectors. The adverse consequences of these imports are evident, as they undermine the competitiveness of local producers, lead to market distortions, the loss of our traditional export destinations and place excessive pressure on our rural economies.
- (3) WELCOME the phase out of the Autonomous Trade Measures (ATM) regime, which has clearly proven to be unbalanced mechanism from the outset and insufficient in defending the interests of the frontline Member States.
- (4) EXPRESS CONCERN that the agreement in principle reached between the Commission and Ukraine on the review of the EU-Ukraine DCFTA based on Article 29 of the Association Agreement between the European Union and Ukraine does not fully address the interests of the frontline Member States. NOTE that the procedure led to the agreement in principle lacked transparency towards the Member States.
- (5) HIGHLIGHT that the review should put special emphasis on the interests of the frontline Member States in order to provide their farmers with sufficient protection.

Therefore we

- (6) BELIEVE that the framework set by the DCFTA provided a solid and predictable basis for our trade relations, and REGRET that the pre-war tariff rate quotas (TRQs) haven't been maintained.
- (7) UNDERLINE that the proposed increases of the tariff rate quotas (TRQs) especially in case of sugar, poultry, eggs, wheat, maize and honey exceeds the expectations. If the final decision will result in the increase of the TRQs, CALL FOR their gradual phase-in over a specific period of time in order to limit their increase to levels which are safe from the point of view of sensitivity of the sectors concerned.

- (8) WELCOME the intention to regionally apply bilateral safeguard provisions similar to those in the European Economic Area agreement. CALL FOR these provisions to be applicable to all agricultural products including those for which EU customs duties were already, or are fully liberalised. These bilateral safeguard provisions should be applicable if imports adversely affect the Union market or the market of one or several Member States.
- (9) URGE the Commission to implement automatically applicable regional safeguards for the frontline Member States by setting individual volume-based triggers (quotas) for the most sensitive agricultural products. The basis of these individual triggers (quotas) should be the normal, pre-war bilateral trade flows between each frontline Member State and Ukraine.
- (10) HIGHLIGHT the importance of inserting a review clause that would ensure the possibility to reassess the agreement in two years' time from its application, thus preventing future market distortions and ensure fair competition for our farmers.
- (11) AGREE that it is important to introduce all the relevant sanitary and phytosanitary, animal welfare, public health and environment related regulations in line with EU standards for Ukrainian agricultural production.
- (12) CALL FOR developing a specific solution for maize, as zero duty is applied in accordance with the current calculation method, which makes it impossible to impose duties on imported maize regardless of the quantity imported. Therefore, we PROPOSE to review the level of the reference thresholds in the Common Market Organisation (CMO) regulation.
- (13) INVITE the Commission to introduce a threshold for minimum import prices for relevant agricultural products, below which safeguard measures would be triggered, to prevent the selling of imported goods below the cost of domestically produced agricultural products.
- (14) WELCOME the maintenance of the entry price system, which protects from low price imports of fruits and vegetables.
- (15) INVITE the Commission to consider establishment of a specific fund to compensate for possible losses incurred by agricultural producers in the EU in case of excessive imports from Ukraine in the future.

- (16) **HIGHLIGHT** that the broad acceptability of the final agreement depends on the proper integration of the measures identified in this declaration, which are essential for the Member States most directly impacted.
- (17) **CALL UPON** the Commission to take this declaration into consideration.

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